Involvement of States in Export Promotion

4418. SHRI CM. IBRAHIM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to set up a Rs. 20 crore fund to involve the states actively in export promotion effort and set a target for export of growth at 20 per cent;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme and its modus operandi;

(c) whether exporters are to be consulted for successful operation of the scheme; and

(d) if so, through which forum or mode and the steps since taken to consult the exporters ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) With a view to making export a national effort involving all the State Governments, a Scheme is being formulated for granting assistance to the states for development of export related infrastructure. The details of the scheme are being worked out.

(c) and (d) The scheme itself has been evolved on the basis of deliberations in the meeting of the Board of the Trade which is a representative body of leading exporters and various apex chambers of Commerce and Industry The scheme has been appreciated, by and large, by the trade and industry.

WTO Agreement

4419. Shri K. RAHMAN KHAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that the WTO Agreement is a ploy of the developed countries to further exploit the developing countries;

(b) if so, what initiatives Government have taken to unite the developing countries and ensure protection of national interests of our country as well as of the developing countries; and

(c) what is the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) WTO Agreements have benefited India and other developing countries in as much as a rule based, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system is essential to ensure effective market access for developing countries like India, who are not a major force in global trade due to their small share, besides being the *sine qua non* for the effective exploitation of trading

opportunities. The WTO Agreements were a package where some provisions have benefited us, whlie others have imposed onerous obligations. An open, fair and rule based trading system is in the interest of developing countries like India, as it protects Members from unilateral action by stronger trading partners. In this connection it may be noted that several developing countries, including China, are currently seeking accession to WTO.

(b) To graner support for the Indian stand on various issues at WTO, India has coordinated with important developing country groupings, such as the SAARC, the G-15 and the G-77. Our proposal for implementation issues have been tabled in the WTO jointly with 11 other likeminded Group of developing countries. In the Third Ministerial Conference of WTO, held at Seattle between 30th November to 3rd December, 1999, India's call for upfront redressal of the implementation concerns of developing countries and opposition to the linkage of trade with core labour standards etc., received support of a number of developing countries. As part of post-Seattle efforts, India has actively participated as a member of the G-77 Group in the X Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Bangkok during 12-19 February, 2000, wherein a Plan of Action was adopted which incorporates the main concerns of the developing countires.

(c) At the Seattle Ministerial Conference of WTO, India had effectively opposed the linkage of trade with core labour standards and attempts for the further expansion of the linkage between trade and environment in the WTO. It also created pressure for the early redressal of implementation problems being experienced by the developing countries. The Seattle Ministerial Conference, however, could reach no conclusions due to wide divergence of views between Members. The Government are continuing efforts for building up solidarity with other likeminded developing countries with a view to facilitate effective projection and protection of Indian national interest in WTO.

Incentives to Food Processing Industries

†4420 SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV : Will the MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have given various incentives to the food processing industries in the country to promote export during the last three years.

† Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.